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FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY PRIORITY
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INFO RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY
RUEHUJA/AMEMBASSY ABUJA 1361
RUEHAR/AMEMBASSY ACCRA 1214
RUEHDS/AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA 1365
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 0626
RUEHDK/AMEMBASSY DAKAR 0991
RUEHKM/AMEMBASSY KAMPALA 1419
RUEHNR/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI 3797
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 1188
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME 1840
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RUEHG/USMISSION GENEVA 0592
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 1582
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RUEHC/DEPT OF LABOR WASHDC
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RUEFDIA/DIA WASHDC//DHO-7//
RUCPDOC/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC
RUFOADA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK//DOOC/ECMO/CC/DAO/DOB/DOI//
RUEPGBA/CDR USEUCOM INTEL VAIHINGEN GE//ECJ23-CH/ECJ5M//

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 HARARE 001322

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AF/S FOR S. HILL
NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR B. PITTMAN
STATE PASS TO USAID FOR M. COPSON AND E. LOKEN
TREASURY FOR J. RALYEYEA AND T. RAND
COMMERCE FOR BECKY ERKUL

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/12/2016

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SUBJECT: KEY ZANU-PF MP ENCOURAGES USG SUPPORT FOR REFORM
PUSH IN PARLIAMENT

REF: HARARE 1317

Classified By: Ambassador Christopher Dell under Section 1.4 b/d

Summary

¶11. (C) U.S. Economics Professor Craig Richardson, who was in Harare to speak at the October 5 American Business Association of Zimbabwe (ABAZ) forum (reftel), along with econoff, met October 4 with Walter Mzembi, the outspoken ZANU-PF Chairman of the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Lands, Land Resettlement, Agriculture and Water Resources. Mzembi said his Committee had drawn conclusions similar to Richardson's on needed reforms. He added that on a recent trip to China, Chinese officials had also recommended market reforms. Mzembi encouraged the Embassy to target 15-20 ruling party MPs to push for reform, and praised the USAID-sponsored SUNY Center for International Development for its effective work with the committees. End Summary

Committee Chair Agrees on Need for Ag Sector Reform

¶12. (SBU) Richardson shared with Mzembi visual evidence (reftel) of the cost of destroying property rights in the agricultural sector in Zimbabwe. Mzembi asked permission to use Richardson's material in his own presentations, to which Richardson agreed. Mzembi pointed out similarities between

several of Richardson's conclusions and those drawn by his Committee in its recent Report on the State of Preparedness by the Agricultural Sector for the 2006/7 Summer Crop Season (e-mailed to AF/S separately), including especially the need for farmers to have land tenure as a means to encourage investment.

Message from China: Embrace Market

¶3. (C) Mzembzi, who was a member of a recent GOZ delegation to China, relayed the gist of those meetings, including with the chairman of the Chinese People's Congress. According to Mzembzi, Chinese officials' advice to the delegation had been to "follow the market route, and take an example from us and what we have achieved." There was no "magic formula" for driving up production other than putting the right legislative framework in place and deregulating the market. The Chinese reaction to the GOZ's request for loans had been to "deal with the Zimbabwean mindset first," before China would open its purse.

Request for USG Assistance

¶4. (C) Turning to Parliament, Mzembzi encouraged the Embassy to focus on ZANU-PF and to target 15-20 ruling party parliamentarians to push for reform. He cautioned against any inclination to write off Parliament. In that regard,

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Mzembzi said the USAID-funded SUNY Center for International Development, which has assisted development of parliamentary committees, had done excellent work in developing the potential of the parliamentary committee structure to bring the Executive branch to account. There was not a committee that had not ruffled the Executive's feathers, thanks to the good work of SUNY, he said. Mzembzi appealed to the USG for further support and suggested it send a delegation of MPs on a study trip to the US Congress.

Comment

¶5. (C) Parliament could be a key factor in advancing a reform agenda in Zimbabwe. MPs from across the political spectrum have been increasingly restive at their lack of influence over policy, openly critical of the executive branch, and have increasingly called for reforms. To that end, we plan to use the SUNY project to encourage greater parliamentary independence as well as to increase the institution's capacity for independent action.

DELL